

WIPP Quick Facts

(As of 11-30-05)

4,110

Shipments received since opening

33,321

Cubic meters of waste disposed

72,865

Containers disposed in the underground



Upcoming Holiday Parties

WTS Kid's Party

December 3 - 12:00 p.m.
Mall Cinema

Movies offered:

Zathura (PG)

and Harry Potter (PG-13)

WTS Christmas Party

December 3 - 5:30 p.m.
Walter Gerrells Performing Arts
& Exhibition Centre Annex

CTAC Holiday Party

December 12 - 6:00 p.m.
Stevens Inn

Triumph Team Christmas Party

(Triumph, NCI, L&M)
December 17 - 6:00 p.m.
Riverside Country Club

NMED issues draft permit

The New Mexico Environment Department issued WIPP a much anticipated draft permit on November 23, following review of a Class 3 permit modification request submitted by CBFO and WTS in April. Prior to issuing the 1,148-page draft permit, NMED twice issued notices of deficiency to CBFO and WTS, seeking additional information.

Vernon Daub, CBFO Assistant Manager for Operations, called the draft permit a significant step for WIPP and credited NMED for its timely delivery: "We very much appreciate the focused, hard work by the NMED staff and senior management. DOE looks forward to participating in the process the Environment Department has established to finalize the draft permit."

The permit modification request submitted by CBFO and WTS in April consolidated a number of proposed changes. Specifically, NMED was asked to consider: 1) remote-handled TRU mixed waste acceptance and disposal, 2) modification of the existing waste analysis plan to improve efficiencies, 3) monitoring volatile organic compounds (air emissions) in underground disposal rooms to demonstrate compliance with WIPP environmental performance standards, 4) increased storage and additional holding areas and 5) verification and examination of waste at WIPP.

Daub emphasized that the proposed changes will continue to protect the health and safety of workers, the public and the environment. "The purpose of these modifications is to improve waste management practices and efficiencies and fulfill WIPP's mission, which is to safely dispose of the nation's TRU waste."

The draft permit is available for public review and comment until January 27, 2006 at <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/wipp>. Comments must be filed with Mr. James P. Bearzi on or before this date at the NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau, 2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87505. If a public hearing is requested and granted by the Secretary, the hearing will begin on March 8, 2006 in Santa Fe.



"We very much appreciate the focused, hard work by the NMED staff and senior management."

-- Vernon Daub,
CBFO Assistant Manager
for Operations

WTS employee wins safety slogan contest

Congratulations to Martin D. Keathley, WTS, who won the 2005 Washington Group International Safety Slogan contest. "Safely Building the Future," was chosen from among more than 700 entries by Washington Group employees around the globe.

Keathley works in Quality Assurance at the WIPP site. He has been with the company for nearly six years and here at WIPP for the last three.

WTS Service Awards

5 years

Kenneth Tanner
L.J. Walker

15 years

Sharleen Strong
Philip Porter

20 years

Orlando Franco

Making a point



Steve Gallagher, WTS Technical Training, makes his point. Gallagher and Candace Nance, WTS Technical Training, provided General Employee Training for a class of 16 new employees. Here are some first impressions of WIPP:

Safety is the primary concern. All employees have been friendly and welcoming. The training has been excellent.

-- K. Alvarez, radiological control technician

The WIPP site and training center was very positive. I felt the sites were well organized, structured & clean. All personnel were friendly & efficient. I felt very welcome.

-- R. Graves, mine operations

All facilities are clean & efficient. Strong safety culture. All employees seem helpful and friendly. People seem to truly appreciate their jobs.

-- A. Haug, radiological control technician

Very security oriented, clean, organized and full of friendly people. Already had my first encounter with the wasps :-)

-- P. Miller, mine operations

Loaded RH-72B makes first trip

As the name implies, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant is a project of firsts. On November 17, the RH-72B shipping cask was used to transport remote-handled (RH) TRU waste for the first time. The lead-shielded cask, designed by WIPP transportation engineers, was certified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in March 2000. NRC was notified before the initial RH-72B shipment from Battelle-Columbus Laboratory (BCL) to the Savannah River Site (SRS) this month.

Cleanup of Battelle's TRU waste began in 2003 with three shipments to Hanford. When Washington State suspended out-of-state TRU shipments to its Hanford site, DOE sought temporary waste storage at SRS until the wastes could be shipped to WIPP for permanent disposal.



Birthday Wishes!

Kevin McTaggart (LANL)
December 3

Earl Bradford (CTAC)
December 3

Luann Underwood (WTS)
December 5

Lynn Eaton (WTS)
December 5

Ron Galbraith (WRES)
December 5

Robbie Morrison (WTS)
December 9

Allison Pangle (CTAC)
December 10

William Foster (WRES)
December 12



WIPP drivers depart Ohio site with first shipment in RH-72B cask.

The campaign restarted last month with a single shipment of contact-handled TRU waste trucked from BCL to SRS in TRUPACT-II shipping containers. On November 16, a three-truck convoy hauling CNS 10-160B shipping containers was used to transport RH-TRU wastes to SRS. The first RH-72B shipment was made the following day.

WTS External Emergency Management coordinated with states along the route to ensure smooth passage. "We used a 3-D mapping system and GPS to plan the safest route possible and one that met Department of Transportation requirements," said manager Lynn Eaton. From BCL in Ohio, the trucks headed south through Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia to SRS in South Carolina. Eaton says three states required escorts: Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky .

Special permits were also needed for the oversized CNS 10-160B loads (DOT's commercial carrier limits are 80,000 pounds (GVW); the average weight of a loaded CNS 10-160 is 103,000).

Soon cleanup of BCL's TRU waste will be complete, says CBFO Institutional Programs manager Ralph Smith. "We had four more shipments to SRS earlier this week, including another one in the 72B, and plan to move the rest of it in early December. This has been in the planning for years."

To date, DOE has cleaned up 12 small-quantity sites nationwide and one major site.

RH wastes sent to SRS were characterized when packaged at BCL. The RH-72B casks and payloads will remain safely stored at SRS until WIPP receives a permit to dispose of RH-TRU mixed wastes.

Arrival



The last shipment of a current NTS shipping campaign arrived at WIPP on November 10.

Santa knows all about vehicle safety

With a total recordable case rate of zero, Santa and his helpers know a thing or two about safety. And just like Santa's sleigh safety program, vehicle safety at WIPP is important all year long, and it is especially important at the holidays.



Santa Claus during a recent visit to WIPP. He knows when you are working safely.

So here are some vehicle safety reminders, because you wouldn't want to wind up on the big guy's naughty list:

Safety everywhere

Vehicle safety is an integral part of the overall safety culture for WIPP employees. The importance of safety extends beyond the fence to all destinations. When traveling to and from work, use caution if using Highway 128 (Jal Highway). Highway 128 is a hazardous roadway due to the narrow two-lane design and heavy traffic by large trucks.

When driving around town or across the country, drive defensively. Other drivers may be distracted, careless or even impaired by alcohol. Remember that drinking and driving never mix, and that seat belts, even for short trips, can save lives.

Parking lots

If you think an SUV is tough to park, try a sleigh and eight tiny reindeer. Remember that the speed limit at the site and at the Skeen-Whitlock Building parking lots is 10 mph. This is extremely important for pedestrians and it also gives you time to apply the brakes if someone backing out doesn't see you coming.

Electric carts

Carts at WIPP are a great way to get around, but be on the lookout for potential hazards. Drivers should exercise caution when operating carts close to buildings, where pedestrians could step out from doorways or around corners without warning.

Unattended vehicles

A sure way to get coal in your stocking is to improperly leave a vehicle unattended at WIPP. Before leaving a vehicle unattended, you must 1) turn the engine off, 2) set the parking brake and 3) chock at least one tire.

Let's have a safe holiday season and remember to keep up our vehicle safety practices all year long.



For a printer-friendly version
of TRU TeamWorks,
please click [here](#).



WTS offers the Blanket Brigade to Christmas on the Pecos visitors



WTS employee Russell Leach (right) hands out blankets to visitors at the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce "Christmas on the Pecos" event. WTS employees have volunteered to staff the Blanket Brigade for three consecutive years.

The U.S. Department of Energy
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Please send comments and/or
suggestions to: [TRU TeamWorks](#)

